Bangela (making) for the *bunana*, a sort of hammock, made of plaited milala which is hung to the branches of the trees and sometimes in summer used for sleeping in, to escape the mosquitoes which swarm inside the huts. 285 513

Runga (sewing) for the boats (byatsho, dji-ma). The ancient Native boats built before the appearance of nails, hammers and saws, were made of pieces of wood securely tied together. Some of these antiquated craft are still to be seen on the Maputju river. 285 501 322●

On the rivers up country, boats are frequently made of a large piece of curved bark, bent on both sides, which will hold two or three persons. I crossed the great Letaba in a boat of this description. Such boats are also used for storing water. Where mimale branches (or nervules) are procurable, they are tied together so as to form a raft called *shikhakhafu*. These are used on the Nkomati River, and on the lakes in Ronga territory. Big rafts made of trunks of trees fastened together, and called *magudhlwana*, were used in former times on the sea, when going to meet the White men, the Ba-Godji. (See later.) They are now no longer used and there is scarcely one to be found. In the neighbourhood of Lourenço Marques the Natives now build their boats on the European model. The fishermen cut down forked branches, which serve as ribs, to which they nail planks. They are wonderfully clever at this work ; one man, Sam Matlombe, nicknamed the "King of the Bay," was particularly expert at it. [177]

The sewn boats of olden times might well be included under the heading of basket-ware. Those of to-day belong definitely to another branch of industry, and will afford us a natural point of transition from basket work to wooden articles.

III. *Wood-carving.*

It is the *nkuhla*, mafureira tree, Trichilia emetica, as we have already seen, that is used by the Natives of these parts for their wood-carving. If the name of this tree is very hard to pronounce, its wood is, to an equal degree, soft and possesses the great 322 531

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Thonga carvings.

(One seventh of the natural size.)

2: Junod M-5 (1895-1909) 1927 Thonga

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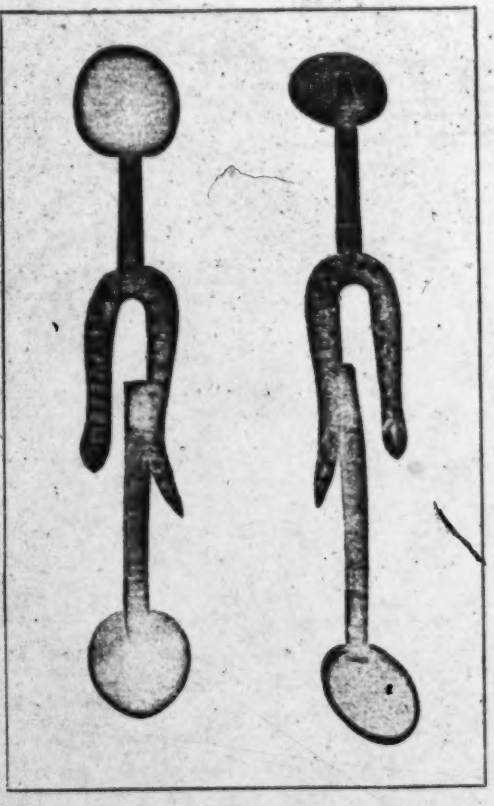
advantage of not easily splitting or cracking when being dried. If Nature had not bestowed on the Thongas this excellent tree, who knows if they would have ever thought of executing the works of art which are depicted in the accompanying illustration!



Carved spoon from Maputju country.

However before thinking of art, they began by cutting, or fashioning, with their small knives, articles of every day use: *spoons* (nkombe, mu mi) for instance, (see illustrations of carvings, No. 1), made in several sizes; the big one is used for serving out the potful of maize amongst the rightful claimants, and the small one for conveying food to the mouth when the hands are ritually soiled (I. p. 193). One often finds really well carved spoons. I give drawings of two which are particularly interesting; the first shows a sort of spiral, or catherine-wheel decoration at the top of the handle (No. 4); the other, brought by Dr. Audeoud from the Maputju country, has a carved snake as an ornamental motive. Spoons are all ornamented, even the plainest, with designs in black, burnt into the wood with a red-hot iron. For beer, ladles are used, made of a single piece of wood; these are generally decorated with large black triangles (No. 2). In Inhambane and Quelimane, the Natives make them of cocoa nut

shells, on which they carve curious geometrical figures (No. 5). 322
Goblets (ntcheko, mu-mi) are generally made with a handle. 531
(No. 6). 415

In the accompanying plate, (p. 131), two spoons are seen hanging to a *chain* made of links carved from nkuhlu wood. This is a wonderful product of Native art. These chains are often met with, especially in the Northern clans, some with links of six inches in length, the whole attaining to a length of many yards. The one here shown is six feet long, with links of only three inches. The special point to be noted in this "objet d'art" is that it has been carved from a single piece of wood and the artist had to make no mistake from the very beginning; a single slip of the knife would have broken the whole chain and made it useless. European joiners told me they doubted whether an ordinary workman would be able to carve such a chain. I was told that these spoon-chains were used by two individuals who wished to form an alliance; they passed the chain over their shoulders and, so united, ate from the same plate. This, however, is mere play and has no ritual value.

Between the two spoons, a kind of *bowl* is seen, almost perfectly round and prettily decorated. It was used by a man who had been possessed, and who washed his face in it every day to cool his head and appease the spirits. Thongas also carve large dishes, sometimes prettily decorated, though not so attractive as those of the Ba-Rotse of the Zambezi. I possess one of two feet in length by 10 inches in width. These are used for serving meat.

I must not forget the *mortars* (tshuri, dji-ma) usually made of mahogany, or of nkanye, and the pestles (musi, mu-mi) made of nkonono. The former are often adorned with triangular carvings.

The same style of decoration is to be seen on the *calabashes* which Natives use as bottles. The calabash, as every one knows, is a sort of gourd composed of two spheres of unequal size with a narrow connection between them. By an ingenious system of supports, placed under the gourd during its growth, Natives succeed in imparting to the upper sphere the shape of an elongated neck. There are many varieties of calabash, some small, furnished

with a long projection and used for drawing the bukanye from the large jars. They are specially kept for this purpose! (See p. 101, No. 7, and also I, p. 400). In Vol. I. p. 50, I have given an

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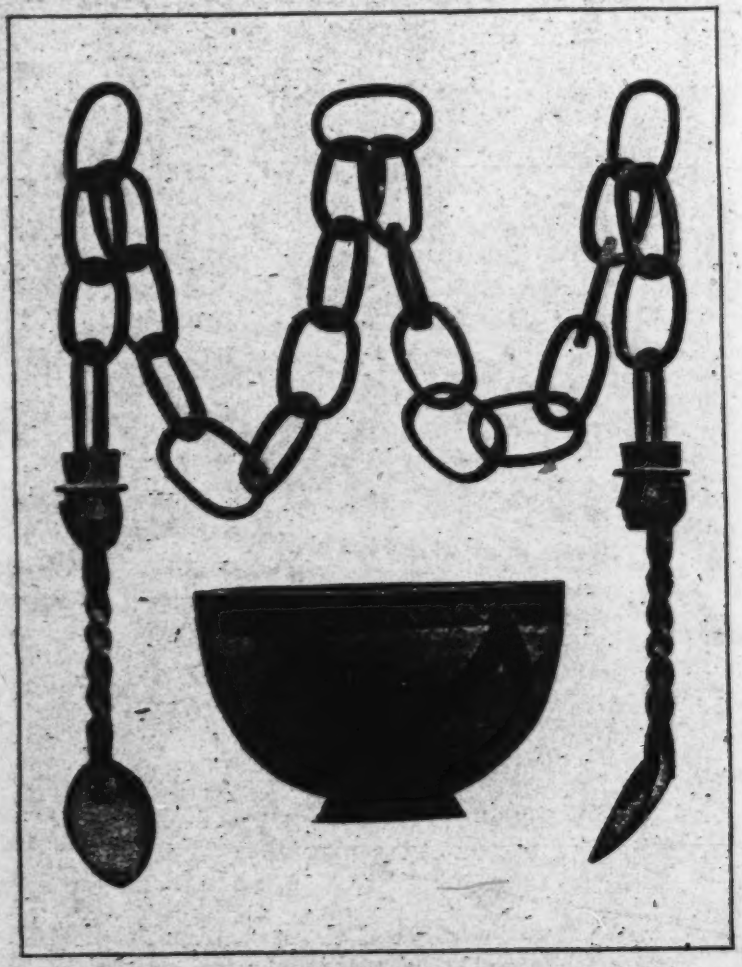


Carved chain and bowl. (Neighbourhood of Lourenço Marques).
(One fifth of the natural size.)

illustration of these bukanye calabashes, called *ntjeko* (mu-mi), very prettily decorated by a Tembe artist. The black designs are burnt in and represent huts, birds, palm trees and, last but not least, two warriors fighting! The white dots are beads inserted

in the soft bark of the calabash. The largest calabash on this plate measures 21 inches in length and 7 in width. 322 531

Some plainer calabashes are Nos. 8 and 9 of the illustration of ornaments. Others are simply shells of sala (shikutja), (p. 16), with a good-sized hole cut in them for an opening (Nos. 6 and 10); a circular piece, say one third the size of the other, makes a capital cover; a string passes through the bottom of the calabash and the middle of the cover, fastening the two together. When this is knotted on top of the latter the *lard tin* is securely closed. This kind of calabash is generally thus designated, for it is in these round balls that the mafureira grease is kept, to which I have previously referred (p. 18). They are hung up in the roof of the hut where they swing to and fro in the smoke and become well browned. The young folks amuse themselves by carving designs on these shells. 415

Mankhelu's stick.

The artistic element is still more striking in the *snuff boxes* (ngulana, yin-tin), carved in ebony, which the chiefs are fond of carrying; the one depicted (p. 128, No. 9) came to me from Mavabaze who was, for a time, chief of the Khosa clan. It is also conspicuous in the strange *pillows* (shidamu) on which the Ba-Ronga rest their heads at night. Let us contemplate this article (No. 8) with the respect it deserves! It is probably on this description of pillow that primitive humanity in all parts of the world has dreamed its dreams! We see it sculptured on the Egyptian monuments, above or by the side of princely couches. We find also among the relics of the lake-dwellers stone objects of a similar shape, which were doubtless used for the same purpose. The Bantu has adhered to this piece of prehistoric furniture all through the ages. 276 532 322 352 322

322 through the ages. The specimen in the illustration[1] was bought
352 from a young man, a traveller, on the road; the bird's claws,
777 beads and other articles tied all round it, doubtless hunting trophies, are plainly to be seen. He had the advantage of literally

Thonga statuettes.
(One third of the natural size.)

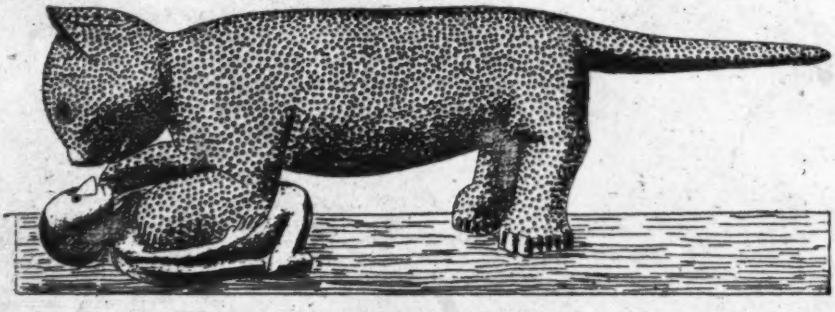
resting on his laurels, and naively believed they would bring him good luck while sleeping.

532 The Thonga artist has even dared to portray the *human form*,
481 and the result of his audacity, however grotesque, is not without
322 originality, and even a certain characteristic style, which may be recognised in all their statuettes. More often they content themselves with carving a man's head, with his crown, on the top of their walking sticks. I here give[2] an illustration of Mankhelu's stick, which was a very old one, dating from 1850,

[1] [The Thonga pillow -- see p. 128, No. 8. -- Analyst]

[2] [p. 133]

532 at least, and shows the primitive style without any European
481 influence. Sometimes they carve the whole body from head to
322 foot ; (as grapes do not grow in their country the use of the classic vine-leaf is quite unknown). No. 3 represents a stick with a man and a woman, the one standing on the other's head, the stronger sex treading the weaker under foot! Large statuettes, of at least one and a half to two feet in height and broad in proportion, are to be seen in the Neuchâtel Ethnographical Museum, which without doubt contains the largest collection of Thonga implements in the world, having been plentifully provided with them by the mission-



A panther devouring an Englishman.
(One twelfth of the natural size.)

aries of French Switzerland No. 7 is smaller, and represents a woman having on her head the typical conical basket, the pride of
532 the workers in the fields, and of the cooks. The five small figures
322 on the accompanying plate are very amusing indeed. They were carved by an artist of Movumbi (near Rikatla), who asserted that the man on the right was a Banyan. The other figures are Natives, men with their wax crowns, and the ladula garment (p. 96) adorned with beads ; one is a woman carrying a child!

The finest specimen of Native art that I ever saw is the carving of a *huge panther* about to devour a human being, the work of Muhlati, a sculptor living in the neighbourhood of Lourenço Marques. This artist, who was very proud of his work, and asked a tolerably high price for it, claimed to be able to carve anything and everything : birds, four-footed beasts, or men. He was famous throughout the land for his talent. Nothing more quaint

[see p. 128. — Analyst]

532 could be imagined than this large spotted creature, (the spots being
322 obtained as usual by burning with a hot iron), planting his claws in the flesh of a man, (an Englishman, I was told by the inspired author of this group!), and glaring at him with two great round eyes, not very symmetrical! With touching forethought, this modern Phidias has made the posterior half of the tail quite independent of the rest of the animal. A tenon and circular

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Thonga canoe. *Phot. A. Burl.*

socket allow the caudal appendage to be so neatly adjusted that the joint is hardly visible! Muhlati told me how the idea of a removable tail had occurred to him. He thought that if ever his masterpiece had to be packed up and cross the ocean, it would thus be more easily cased. This can hardly be called the idea of a savage! Besides, the work itself would never have been accomplished had there been no Whites in the country. Evidently the sculptor, indolent like all his race, would not have worked day in and day out at carving such an animal as a play-thing for his children. He concluded that his talent might well bring him in some money; it was mercenary considerations that urged him on to the execution of the work, and no mere love of art; nevertheless

532 I do not believe any foreign influence was exercised in the
322 conception of the idea. His group is absolutely original, and, as such, shows us to what lengths the sculptural talent of the Ba-Ronga can go. This group is now in the Neuchâtel Museum.

313 While statuettes are the most elaborate products of Native
532 sculpture, *canoes* (shene (Dj.) are the largest. I have already
322 mentioned the taboos connected with the cutting of the mahogany and nkwenga trees when used for this purpose (p. 19). Other trees, the mpfubu and the muhlu, can be cut without these precautions being taken.

IV. *Metallurgy.*

172 When and how did iron reach the Ba-Ronga ? Probably we
412 shall never be able to ascertain. Tradition has it that the primitive
316 inhabitants of Nondwane, the Honwana, who cooked elephants in order to tear them in pieces, had no iron implements. Some authorities tell us that the hoe in use in olden times was of an exceedingly hard wood, wrenched I know not how from a species of teak tree called *ntjhiba*. The Natives of these parts must have passed directly from the age of wood to that of iron. There was certainly a stone age, comparable to that of the lake dwellers, in Cape Colony, where a great quantity of silex and of polished stones have been found. I never heard of any such implements having been used by the Thongas, nor found within their territory. As regards the bronze age, they have known the use of copper for a long time, but it cannot be proved that they knew it before iron.

177 Iron and other metals seem to have been first introduced in
439 Delagoa Bay by the "Godji" traders and whale fishers, of whom
316 I shall shortly speak ; they are the first White visitors whom the Natives now remember. The Ba-Ronga used to exchange fowls and other domestic animals for hoes, brass bracelets, and copper brought by the strangers, and they had found out how to make copper wire by forging (fula) the pieces bought from the "Godji."